METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL Minutes
Friday, September 12th, 2025, from 9-10am

The Regional Quality Councils shall:
1. Support efforts and initiatives that drive overall systems and social change to promote inclusion of people who have disabilities in the state of Minnesota
2. Improve person-centered outcomes in disability services; and
3. Identify or enhance quality of life indicators for people who have disabilities.

Meeting Attendance

Attendees: Benjamin, Christina, Dr Mohamed, Adam, Lynn, Robyn, Diane, Amelia D, Becky Rother, Yue Wu, Judi Marie
Staff Attendees: JoAnn, Sophie, Kerrie, Cortney, Diana Reyes

Meeting Overview

1. Introductions

Annelise will no longer be part of the MRQC and Megan Zellinger will take her place representing Dakota County.

2. Workgroups Updates

- ### Culture of Safety Workgroup

  This workgroup meets separately outside of monthly council meetings. They meet on the second Thursday of each month from 1-3pm.

  Their next meeting is **Thursday, October 9th from 1-3pm.**

  Join Zoom Meeting
  https://arcminnesota.zoom.us/j/87931714598?pwd=J3UWuLFrAlr1mSVbNZFGayJ3Gwwnlx.1

  Meeting ID: 879 3171 4598
  Passcode: 116521

- ### Staffing (DSPs & PCAs) Shortage Workgroup

  This workgroup meets separately outside of monthly council meetings. They meet on the fourth Thursday of each month from 11am-12:30pm.
  The September meeting is **cancelled**
  Create short videos for educating DSPs on how to advocate for themselves relating to legislatures.

Employment Workgroup

Human Resources Project

Goal: Collaborating with faculty from college and university to create learning opportunities for their students and staff so they can become more educated about people with disabilities and their potential as future employees.

- **Updates:**

Presenting at Normandale Community College on October 8th from 1-4pm

  - Normandale's staff development day
  - 3 speakers- Lexi, Amelia, Lynn

- Yue Wu and Diana can provide us with a connection at Augsburg College we could possibly use.

Employment Services Survey Project

Goal: Survey Employment Services providers and employees to find out what barriers they face when providing services to people with disabilities.

- **Actions taken:**
  - Officially partnered with Hennepin County and Dakota County
  - MRQC staff started emailing the surveys
  - Help by sharing the links to the surveys and flyers posted on the MRQC employment workgroup page on the RQC website
- **Additional info and questions:**

What is the time frame for the surveys being open?
Hennepin County needs the info by 9/18 for their grant purposes.
Time frame, we can decide our own time frame.
Frank can help analyze the results.

Transportation Workgroup

Recap of the Community Conversation Event- Rethinking i-94 Project

- About 19 people attended- attendees included MRQC and The Arc MN staff, residents of the communities affected by the project, those studying transportation at University, and of course MnDOT staff.
- MnDOT presented a power point explaining the history of project and how it came about.
  The PowerPoint is available at talk.dot.state.mn.us/rethinkinkg-i94

Brief Project Overview: The highway due to degradation over time is in need of repair. MnDOT in partnership with the FHA (Federal Highway Administration) wants to address these growing maintenance concerns but also wants to avoid repeating past wrongdoings like dividing the Rondo Community. The project covers 7 ½ mile stretch from Marion Street in St Paul to highway 55. Work on the project started in 2016 and has laid out a timeline of different phases the project will go through. There is a Purpose and Need phase which identifies transportation problems such as walkability, rolling (wheelchair users), bikeability, safety, mobility of motor vehicles etc. and takes into account considerations from NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) into their analyses process and evaluation criteria. There is also the Social, Economic and Environmental Resources phase which addresses issues such as water and noise pollution. And the last 2 phases are Community Goals and Additional Considerations. MnDOT has proposed 10 alternatives that would replace what currently exists.

4 Alternatives to move forward:

1) **No Build-** remain the same with no improvements and existing transit services would continue
2) **Maintenance B-** update existing infrastructure to current standards and add shoulders wide enough for buses (Metro Mobility could make use of the added shoulders)
3) **Reduced freeway A-** rebuild existing lanes down from 4 to 3 lanes in both directions and the 3rd lane would be a paid lane during peak times (4 hours a day during morning from 6-10am and evening 3-7pm)
4) **Reconfigure freeway A-** similar to option 3, rebuild existing freeway and convert a lane to become managed lane for BRT

Alternatives NOT moving forward

1) **Maintenance A-** maintain what already exists and not change anything
2) **At Grade A-** fill in trench to make it ground level and replace freeway with 4 lanes, 2 lanes in each direction plus 2 BRT lanes in each direction adding bike and walk lanes outside of local traffic lanes
3) **At Grade B-** similar to Grade A, except transit lanes are on the outside
   Doesn't support At Grade because of increase in crashes and number of cars on local road**s**
4) **Local/Regional Roadways A-** breaks freeway into 2 roadway systems, a local roadway and a freeway with limited access points and transit on the shoulder
5) **Expanded freeway A-** adding to what already exists with a managed BRT lane down the middle
6) **Expanded freeway B-** adds to what already exists an extra travel lane in each direction

Attendee questions and MnDOT Answers

Q: Is there a variety of people included in the decision-making process?

A: MnDOT has included people from the ADA workgroup, biking workgroup, policy groups, etc.

Q. Regarding option 2, how does it improve walkability, bikeability, rolling?

A: Replacing the bridge would improve those pathways and make it easier to cross the highway

Q: What about structures built into sidewalks like trees and lights that make it hard for wheelchairs?

A: When replacing old roads, we are more aware of what is currently needed but it's difficult to address everything

Q: Can medical vans use those paid lanes?

A: As long as there are more than 2 people in a vehicle, they can use them for free.

Q: People's driving behavior would change with the At Grade option?

A: Our analysis shows people might combine trips, take less trips, or change driving times, but still see a lot of trips happening and think we did enough to show that our concerns with the At Grade are valid.

Q: Induced demand not factored into traffic numbers?

A: Expanded freeway options were rejected because of it.

Q: Crash rates at high-speed roads?

A: Local roads have higher crash rates than local interstate.

Q. How is the highway being rethought so the past isn't repeated?

A: There is already a road there, so we are not taking away peoples' homes, and filling in the trench would cause disruption to local roads and neighborhoods and would not be compatible with the Rondo land bridge with the AT Grade.

Q: Is one of the At Grade options still an option which seems like a truly rethought idea?

A: The current options we support to advance are the 4 alternatives mentioned already to move forward. If people want to comment in support of the AT Grade options, they should include what MnDOT has done wrong and what MnDOT hasn't taken into account instead of just saying I prefer it. Nothing is finalized until the Scoping Decision Document is signed.

Community Engagement Opportunities- Allows people to learn more, leave comments and ask questions about the project.

- Coffee in Community- Next event is September 30th at Yum Kitchen from 11am-1pm.
- Community Events
- Public comment period- whatever the people are recorded but not included in the Scoping Decision Document. Email your comments at rethinkingI94project.dot@state.mn.us

Transportation ideas:

- What do people think about the new pilot program Premium on Demand?
  It differs from Metro Mobility because it works more like a taxi service and offers same day booking and ride services and also extended hours.
  To learn more, visit
  https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmetrocouncil.org%2FTransportation%2FServices%2FMetro-Mobility-Home.aspx&data=05%7C02%7CRobin.Rohr%40hennepin.us%7Ca69ff10dcecd4d01631408ddf0add60a%7C8aefdf9f878046bf8fb74c924653a8be%7C0%7C0%7C638931351608040731%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2B%2FVFANkcqB2jq1OjW%2B%2FcSZx%2FjQtZ2UgECv6yh6SCAfY%3D&reserved=0
- ICI along with the U of M is offering training to young people to educate them about taking transportation.